

DOCUMENT A00870

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
  
CONCURRENCE VERIFICATION LETTER**

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## United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
New England Ecological Services Field Office  
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In Reply Refer To:

August 02, 2022

Project code: 2022-0070371

Project Name: 608929 - WILMINGTON- BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, W-38-003, BUTTERS ROW OVER MBTA

Subject: Concurrence verification letter for the '608929 - WILMINGTON- BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, W-38-003, BUTTERS ROW OVER MBTA' project under the revised February 5, 2018, FHWA, FRA, FTA Programmatic Biological Opinion for Transportation Projects within the Range of the Indiana Bat and Northern Long-eared Bat.

To whom it may concern:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has received your request dated August 02, 2022 to verify that the **608929 - WILMINGTON- BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, W-38-003, BUTTERS ROW OVER MBTA** (Proposed Action) may rely on the concurrence provided in the February 5, 2018, FHWA, FRA, FTA Programmatic Biological Opinion for Transportation Projects within the Range of the Indiana Bat and Northern Long-eared Bat (PBO) to satisfy requirements under Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C 1531 *et seq.*).

Based on the information you provided (Project Description shown below), you have determined that the Proposed Action is within the scope and adheres to the criteria of the PBO, including the adoption of applicable avoidance and minimization measures, and may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect (NLAA) the endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) and/or the threatened Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*). Consultation with the Service pursuant to Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) is required.

The Service has 14 calendar days to notify the lead Federal action agency or designated non-federal representative if we determine that the Proposed Action does not meet the criteria for a NLAA determination under the PBO. If we do not notify the lead Federal action agency or designated non-federal representative within that timeframe, you may proceed with the Proposed Action under the terms of the NLAA concurrence provided in the PBO. This verification period allows Service Field Offices to apply local knowledge to implementation of the PBO, as we may

identify a small subset of actions having impacts that were unanticipated. In such instances, Service Field Offices may request additional information that is necessary to verify inclusion of the proposed action under the PBO.

**For Proposed Actions that include bridge/culvert or structure removal, replacement, and/or maintenance activities:** If your initial bridge/culvert or structure assessments failed to detect Indiana bats, but you later detect bats prior to, or during construction, please submit the Post Assessment Discovery of Bats at Bridge/Culvert or Structure Form (User Guide Appendix E) to this Service Office. In these instances, potential incidental take of Indiana bats may be exempted provided that the take is reported to the Service.

If the Proposed Action is modified, or new information reveals that it may affect the Indiana bat and/or Northern long-eared bat in a manner or to an extent not considered in the PBO, further review to conclude the requirements of ESA Section 7(a)(2) may be required. If the Proposed Action may affect any other federally-listed or proposed species, and/or any designated critical habitat, additional consultation between the lead Federal action agency and this Service Office is required. If the proposed action has the potential to take bald or golden eagles, additional coordination with the Service under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act may also be required. In either of these circumstances, please contact this Service Office.

The following species may occur in your project area and **are not** covered by this determination:

- Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus* Candidate

## **Project Description**

The following project name and description was collected in IPaC as part of the endangered species review process.

### ***Name***

608929 - WILMINGTON- BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, W-38-003, BUTTERS ROW OVER MBTA

### ***Description***

608929 - WILMINGTON- BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, W-38-003, BUTTERS ROW OVER MBTA

Proposed scope of work includes demolition and full replacement of the existing 3-span timber bridge structure at Butters Row over the MBTA Railroad in Wilmington.

Monarch Butterfly: Candidate Species only, no conservation measures at this time.

## Determination Key Result

Based on your answers provided, this project(s) may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the endangered Indiana bat and/or the threatened Northern long-eared bat, therefore, consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service pursuant to Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) (87 Stat. 884, as amended 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) is required. However, also based on your answers provided, this project may rely on the concurrence provided in the revised February 5, 2018, FHWA, FRA, FTA Programmatic Biological Opinion for Transportation Projects within the Range of the Indiana Bat and Northern Long-eared Bat.

## Qualification Interview

1. Is the project within the range of the Indiana bat<sup>[1]</sup>?

[1] See [Indiana bat species profile](#)

**Automatically answered**

No

2. Is the project within the range of the Northern long-eared bat<sup>[1]</sup>?

[1] See [Northern long-eared bat species profile](#)

**Automatically answered**

Yes

3. Which Federal Agency is the lead for the action?

A) *Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)*

4. Are *all* project activities limited to non-construction<sup>[1]</sup> activities only? (examples of non-construction activities include: bridge/abandoned structure assessments, surveys, planning and technical studies, property inspections, and property sales)

[1] Construction refers to activities involving ground disturbance, percussive noise, and/or lighting.

No

5. Does the project include *any* activities that are **greater than** 300 feet from existing road/rail surfaces<sup>[1]</sup>?

[1] Road surface is defined as the actively used [e.g. motorized vehicles] driving surface and shoulders [may be pavement, gravel, etc.] and rail surface is defined as the edge of the actively used rail ballast.

No

6. Does the project include *any* activities **within** 0.5 miles of a known Indiana bat and/or NLEB hibernaculum<sup>[1]</sup>?

[1] For the purpose of this consultation, a hibernaculum is a site, most often a cave or mine, where bats hibernate during the winter (see suitable habitat), but could also include bridges and structures if bats are found to be hibernating there during the winter.

No

7. Is the project located **within** a karst area?

No

8. Is there *any* suitable<sup>[1]</sup> summer habitat for Indiana Bat or NLEB **within** the project action area<sup>[2]</sup>? (includes any trees suitable for maternity, roosting, foraging, or travelling habitat)

[1] See the Service's [summer survey guidance](#) for our current definitions of suitable habitat.

[2] The action area is defined as all areas to be affected directly or indirectly by the Federal action and not merely the immediate area involved in the action (50 CFR Section 402.02). Further clarification is provided by the [User's Guide for the Range-wide Programmatic Consultation for Indiana Bat and Northern Long-eared Bat](#).

Yes

9. Will the project remove *any* suitable summer habitat<sup>[1]</sup> and/or remove/trim any existing trees **within** suitable summer habitat?

[1] See the Service's [summer survey guidance](#) for our current definitions of suitable habitat.

Yes

10. Will the project clear more than 20 acres of suitable habitat per 5-mile section of road/rail?

No

11. Have presence/probable absence (P/A) summer surveys<sup>[1][2]</sup> been conducted<sup>[3][4]</sup> **within** the suitable habitat located within your project action area?

[1] See the Service's [summer survey guidance](#) for our current definitions of suitable habitat.

[2] Presence/probable absence summer surveys conducted within the fall swarming/spring emergence home range of a documented Indiana bat hibernaculum (contact local Service Field Office for appropriate distance from hibernacula) that result in a negative finding requires additional consultation with the local Service Field Office to determine if clearing of forested habitat is appropriate and/or if seasonal clearing restrictions are needed to avoid and minimize potential adverse effects on fall swarming and spring emerging Indiana bats.

[3] For projects within the range of either the Indiana bat or NLEB in which suitable habitat is present, and no bat surveys have been conducted, the transportation agency will assume presence of the appropriate species. This assumption of presence should be based upon the presence of suitable habitat and the capability of bats to occupy it because of their mobility.

[4] Negative presence/probable absence survey results obtained using the [summer survey guidance](#) are valid for a minimum of two years from the completion of the survey unless new information (e.g., other nearby surveys) suggest otherwise.

Yes

#### **SUBMITTED DOCUMENTS**

- 608929\_rpt\_wilmington2\_nleb\_survey\_20210922.pdf <https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/project/7H73T3KCGBEEFFCNU4SXVWLX6I/projectDocuments/115622624>

12. Did the presence/probable absence (P/A) summer surveys detect Indiana bats and/or NLEB<sup>[1]</sup>?

[1] P/A summer surveys conducted within the fall swarming/spring emergence home range of a documented Indiana bat hibernaculum (contact local Service Field Office for appropriate home range) that result in a negative finding requires additional consultation with the local Service Field Office to determine if clearing of forested habitat is appropriate and/or if seasonal clearing restrictions are needed to avoid and minimize potential adverse effects on fall swarming and spring emerging Indiana bats.

No

13. Were the P/A summer surveys conducted **within** the fall swarming/spring emergence range of a documented Indiana bat hibernaculum<sup>[1]</sup>?

[1] Contact the local Service Field Office for appropriate distance from hibernacula.

No

14. Does the project include activities **within documented NLEB habitat**<sup>[1][2]</sup>?

[1] Documented roosting or foraging habitat – for the purposes of this consultation, we are considering documented habitat as that where Indiana bats and/or NLEB have actually been captured and tracked using (1) radio telemetry to roosts; (2) radio telemetry triangulation/triangulation to estimate foraging areas; or (3) foraging areas with repeated use documented using acoustics. Documented roosting habitat is also considered as suitable summer habitat within 0.25 miles of documented roosts.)

[2] For the purposes of this key, we are considering documented corridors as that where Indiana bats and/or NLEB have actually been captured and tracked to using (1) radio telemetry; or (2) treed corridors located directly between documented roosting and foraging habitat.

No

15. Will the removal or trimming of habitat or trees occur **within** suitable but **undocumented NLEB** roosting/foraging habitat or travel corridors?

Yes

16. What time of year will the removal or trimming of habitat or trees **within** suitable but **undocumented NLEB** roosting/foraging habitat or travel corridors occur?

*C) During both the active and inactive seasons*

17. Will *any* tree trimming or removal occur **within** 100 feet of existing road/rail surfaces?

Yes

18. Will *any* tree trimming or removal occur **between** 100-300 feet of existing road/rail surfaces?

No

19. Are *all* trees that are being removed clearly demarcated?

Yes

20. Will the removal of habitat or the removal/trimming of trees involve the use of **temporary** lighting?

Yes



21. Will the removal of habitat or the removal/trimming of trees include installing new or replacing existing **permanent** lighting?

*Yes*

22. Does the project include wetland or stream protection activities associated with compensatory wetland mitigation?

*Yes*

23. Does the project include slash pile burning?

*No*

24. Does the project include *any* bridge removal, replacement, and/or maintenance activities (e.g., any bridge repair, retrofit, maintenance, and/or rehabilitation work)?

*Yes*

25. Is there *any* suitable habitat<sup>[1]</sup> for Indiana bat or NLEB **within** 1,000 feet of the bridge? (includes any trees suitable for maternity, roosting, foraging, or travelling habitat)

[1] See the Service's current [summer survey guidance](#) for our current definitions of suitable habitat.

*Yes*

26. Has a bridge assessment<sup>[1]</sup> been conducted **within** the last 24 months<sup>[2]</sup> to determine if the bridge is being used by bats?

[1] See [User Guide Appendix D](#) for bridge/structure assessment guidance

[2] Assessments must be completed no more than 2 years prior to conducting any work below the deck surface on all bridges that meet the physical characteristics described in the Programmatic Consultation, regardless of whether assessments have been conducted in the past. Due to the transitory nature of bat use, a negative result in one year does not guarantee that bats will not use that bridge/structure in subsequent years.

*No*

27. Is the bridge **within** a known maternity colony's home range<sup>[1]</sup>?

[1] Contact your local FWS office for more information if you are uncertain about where the nearest known maternity colony is located.

*No*

28. Have presence/probable absence (P/A) summer surveys<sup>[1][2]</sup> been conducted for this project with at least one survey point **within** suitable habitat and **within** 0.25 miles of the bridge<sup>[3][4]</sup>?

[1] See the Service's [summer survey guidance](#) for our current definitions of suitable habitat.

[2] Presence/probable absence summer surveys conducted within the fall swarming/spring emergence home range of a documented Indiana bat hibernaculum (contact local Service Field Office for appropriate distance from hibernacula) that result in a negative finding requires additional consultation with the local Service Field Office to determine if clearing of forested habitat is appropriate and/or if seasonal clearing restrictions are needed to avoid and minimize potential adverse effects on fall swarming and spring emerging Indiana bats.

[3] For projects within the range of either the Indiana bat or NLEB in which suitable habitat is present, and no bat surveys have been conducted, the transportation agency will assume presence of the appropriate species. This assumption of presence should be based upon the presence of suitable habitat and the capability of bats to occupy it because of their mobility.

[4] Negative presence/probable absence survey results obtained using the [summer survey guidance](#) are valid for a minimum of two years from the completion of the survey unless new information (e.g., other nearby surveys) suggest otherwise.

*Yes, P/A summer surveys were conducted within 0.25 miles of the bridge*

#### **SUBMITTED DOCUMENTS**

- 608929\_rpt\_wilmington2\_nleb\_survey\_20210922.pdf <https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/project/7H73T3KCGBEEFFCNU4SXVWLX6I/projectDocuments/115622624>

29. Did the presence/probable absence (P/A) summer surveys detect Indiana bats and/or NLEB<sup>[1]</sup>?

[1] P/A summer surveys conducted within the fall swarming/spring emergence home range of a documented Indiana bat hibernaculum (contact local Service Field Office for appropriate home range) that result in a negative finding requires additional consultation with the local Service Field Office to determine if clearing of forested habitat is appropriate and/or if seasonal clearing restrictions are needed to avoid and minimize potential adverse effects on fall swarming and spring emerging Indiana bats.

*No, Indiana bats and/or NLEBs were not detected during the P/A surveys*

30. Did the local Service Field Office verify<sup>[1]</sup> that this presence/probable absence (P/A) summer survey can be used for determining Indiana bat and/or NLEB absence from the bridge?

[1] Coordination with local US Fish and Wildlife Service Field Office regarding the applicability of P/A surveys for this use is required.

*Yes, the local FWS office confirmed that this P/A survey can be used to assume Indiana bats and/or NLEBs are absent from the bridge*

31. Will the bridge removal, replacement, and/or maintenance activities include installing new or replacing existing **permanent** lighting?

*Yes*

32. Does the project include the removal, replacement, and/or maintenance of *any* structure other than a bridge? (e.g., rest areas, offices, sheds, outbuildings, barns, parking garages, etc.)

No

33. Will the project involve the use of *any* **temporary** lighting in addition to the lighting already indicated for habitat removal (including the removal or trimming of trees), or bridge/structure removal, replacement or maintenance activities?

Yes

34. Is there *any* suitable habitat **within** 1,000 feet of the location(s) where **temporary** lighting (other than the lighting already indicated for habitat removal (including the removal or trimming of trees) or bridge/structure removal, replacement or maintenance activities) will be used?

Yes

35. Will the project install *any* new or replace any existing **permanent** lighting in addition to the lighting already indicated for habitat removal (including the removal or trimming of trees) or bridge/structure removal, replacement or maintenance activities?

Yes

36. Is there *any* suitable habitat **within** 1,000 feet of the location(s) where **permanent** lighting (other than the lighting already indicated for habitat removal (including the removal or trimming of trees) or bridge/structure removal, replacement or maintenance activities) will be installed or replaced?

Yes

37. Does the project include percussives or other activities (**not including tree removal/trimming or bridge/structure work**) that will increase noise levels above existing traffic/background levels?

Yes

38. Will the activities that use percussives (**not including tree removal/trimming or bridge/structure work**) and/or increase noise levels above existing traffic/background levels be conducted *during* the active season<sup>[1]</sup>?

[1] Coordinate with the local Service Field Office for appropriate dates.

Yes

39. Will *any* activities that use percussives (**not including tree removal/trimming or bridge/structure work**) and/or increase noise levels above existing traffic/background levels be conducted *during* the inactive season<sup>[1]</sup>?

[1] Coordinate with the local Service Field Office for appropriate dates.

Yes

40. Are *all* project activities that are **not associated with** habitat removal, tree removal/trimming, bridge and/or structure activities, temporary or permanent lighting, or use of percussives, limited to actions that DO NOT cause any additional stressors to the bat species?

Examples: lining roadways, unlighted signage , rail road crossing signals, signal lighting, and minor road repair such as asphalt fill of potholes, etc.

Yes

41. Will the project raise the road profile **above the tree canopy**?

No

42. Are the wetland or stream protection activities associated with compensatory wetland/stream mitigation portion of this project consistent with a Not Likely to Adversely Affect determination in this key?

**Automatically answered**

*Yes, because your activities associated with compensatory wetland/stream mitigation activities do not clear suitable summer habitat and are not within 0.5 miles of Indiana bat or NLEB hibernaculum.*

43. Are the project activities that use percussives (not including tree removal/trimming or bridge/structure work) consistent with a Not Likely to Adversely Affect determination in this key?

**Automatically answered**

*Yes, because the activities are within 300 feet of the existing road/rail surface, greater than 0.5 miles from a hibernacula, and conducted during the active season within undocumented habitat.*

44. Are the project activities that use percussives (not including tree removal/trimming or bridge/structure work) and/or increase noise levels above existing traffic/background levels consistent with a No Effect determination in this key?

**Automatically answered**

*Yes, because the activities are within 300 feet of the existing road/rail surface, greater than 0.5 miles from a hibernacula, and conducted during the inactive season*

45. Is the location of this project consistent with a Not Likely to Adversely Affect determination in this key?

**Automatically answered**

*Yes, because no bats were detected during presence/probable absence surveys conducted during the summer survey season and outside of the fall swarming/spring emergence periods. Additionally, all activities were at least 0.5 miles from any hibernaculum.*

46. Is the bridge removal, replacement, or maintenance activities portion of this project consistent with a No Effect determination in this key?

**Automatically answered**

*Yes, because the bridge has been assessed using the criteria documented in the BA and no signs of bats were detected*

47. **General AMM 1**

Will the project ensure *all* operators, employees, and contractors working in areas of known or presumed bat habitat are aware of *all* FHWA/FRA/FTA (Transportation Agencies) environmental commitments, including all applicable Avoidance and Minimization Measures?

Yes

## Project Questionnaire

1. Have you made a No Effect determination for *all* other species indicated on the FWS IPaC generated species list?

N/A

2. Have you made a May Affect determination for *any* other species on the FWS IPaC generated species list?

N/A

3. How many acres<sup>[1]</sup> of trees are proposed for removal between 0-100 feet of the existing road/rail surface?

[1] If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

1.1

4. Please describe the proposed bridge work:

*The existing bridge is a wooden superstructure and only one lane wide. The entire bridge and substructure will be removed and replaced with at Steel and concrete structure – 2 lanes wide with sidewalks and bike lanes.*

5. Please state the timing of all proposed bridge work:

*Winter 2023-Winter 2025*

## Avoidance And Minimization Measures (AMMs)

This determination key result includes the commitment to implement the following Avoidance and Minimization Measures (AMMs):

### GENERAL AMM 1

Ensure all operators, employees, and contractors working in areas of known or presumed bat habitat are aware of all FHWA/FRA/FTA (Transportation Agencies) environmental commitments, including all applicable AMMs.

## **Determination Key Description: FHWA, FRA, FTA Programmatic Consultation For Transportation Projects Affecting NLEB Or Indiana Bat**

This key was last updated in IPaC on April 28, 2022. Keys are subject to periodic revision.

This decision key is intended for projects/activities funded or authorized by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), and/or Federal Transit Administration (FTA), which may require consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) for the endangered **Indiana bat** (*Myotis sodalis*) and the threatened **Northern long-eared bat** (NLEB) (*Myotis septentrionalis*).

This decision key should only be used to verify project applicability with the Service's [February 5, 2018, FHWA, FRA, FTA Programmatic Biological Opinion for Transportation Projects](#). The programmatic biological opinion covers limited transportation activities that may affect either bat species, and addresses situations that are both likely and not likely to adversely affect either bat species. This decision key will assist in identifying the effect of a specific project/activity and applicability of the programmatic consultation. The programmatic biological opinion is not intended to cover all types of transportation actions. Activities outside the scope of the programmatic biological opinion, or that may affect ESA-listed species other than the Indiana bat or NLEB, or any designated critical habitat, may require additional ESA Section 7 consultation.

## **IPaC User Contact Information**

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## **Lead Agency Contact Information**

Lead Agency: Federal Highway Administration

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